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## ***Michigan Residents Support Tougher Math, Science Requirements***

**CONTACT:**

Melissa Riba

Public Sector Consultants Inc.

517/484-4954

A poll released Tuesday by Public Sector Consultants Inc. of Lansing shows that approximately two-thirds of the Michigan public view advanced math requirements in high schools as “very necessary” for preparing Michigan high school students for jobs in the global economy. Another 61 percent view advanced science courses as equally necessary in preparing Michigan students to be competitive in the global economy.

The poll of 600 randomly selected Michigan adults was conducted in January 23–February 3, 2006 by Public Sector Consultants; it has a sampling error (margin of error) of  $\pm 4.0$  percent. The poll has been conducted every 2–3 years and covers a number of topics related to public education in Michigan, including the new curriculum standards.

Overall, there is broad support for the proposed curriculum standards:

- More than three out of four (77 percent) Michigan residents support the new curriculum standards.
- Michigan residents find the argument that the new requirements would make Michigan students more competitive in the global economy quite convincing—82 percent of residents are either much more likely (61 percent) or somewhat more likely (21 percent) to support the new standards upon hearing this argument.
- The argument that the new requirements could make it tougher for some students to graduate dissuades less than one-fourth of residents from supporting the standards.
- Subjects also viewed as very necessary are technology and computer classes (91 percent), English (90 percent), algebra (75 percent), and civic education (72 percent).

Other findings include:

- Nearly one-third (32 percent) of those polled believe that the quality of education provided by their local schools is getting better; 40 percent think the quality has stayed the same, and 23 percent believe it has gotten worse.
- Seventy-eight percent of residents believe that it is “very important” that public schools prepare Michigan high school seniors to compete in a global economy, yet only 11 percent believe that students from their local schools are “very prepared” to do so.

Public Sector Consultants Inc. (PSC) is a private Michigan corporation providing policy research in the areas of health, education, economics, the environment, and technology; survey research; program evaluation; and strategic planning. It has conducted the education poll since 1982. The poll was supported by a broad coalition of Michigan education and business leaders, including the Michigan Association of School Administrators, Michigan Association of School Boards, Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence, the Michigan Coalition for Civic Education, the Michigan Department of Education, and the Michigan Education Association.